Lovereading.co.uk
Helping you choose your next book

You loved your last book...but what are you going to read next?

Using our unique guidance tools, Love**reading** will help you find new books to keep you inspired and entertained.

Opening Extract from...

William Morris Décor & Design

Written by Elizabeth Wilhide

Published by Pavilion Books

All text is copyright © of the author

This Opening Extract is exclusive to Love**reading**.
Please print off and read at your leisure.

To M.L.

Published in the United Kingdom in 2016 by
Pavilion
1 Gower Street
London
WC1E 6HD

Copyright © Pavilion Books Company Ltd 1991, 2014
Text © Elizabeth Wilhide 1991, 2014

The moral right of the author has been asserted.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be copied, displayed, extracted, reproduced, utilised, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical or otherwise including but not limited to photocopying, recording, or scanning without the prior written permission of the publishers.

ISBN 978-1-910904-86-2

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available
from the British Library

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Reproduction by Mission, Hong Kong
Printed by Toppan Leefung Printing Ltd, China

This book can be ordered direct from the publisher at www.pavilionbooks.com



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION: WILLIAM MORRIS: HIS LIFE & WORK 6

1 WILLIAM MORRIS AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY INTERIORS 35

2 DECORATING WITH PATTERN 60

3 WALLS AND FINISHES 84

4 CURTAINS AND WINDOW TREATMENTS 118

5 FURNITURE AND FURNISHINGS 142

GLOSSARY OF PATTERNS 167

COMMERCIAL SUPPLIERS 187

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY 189

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 190

INDEX 191



LEFT An angel with a dulcimer, 1882, from St Peter and St Paul, Cattistock, Dorset. The Firm's distinctive stained glass work was a return to the spirit of the great medieval tradition, using bold outlines and a mosaic of pure colour for a rich, glowing effect. Morris's instinctive colour sense was invaluable in this respect; although Burne-Jones, Webb and Rossetti drew many of the figures and animals in the Firm's designs, Morris was responsible for turning those drawings into stained glass, choosing the colours and setting the leaded lines.

out areas of specialization, including mural painting, carving, stained glass, metal work and furniture making. Initially the greatest demand was ecclesiastical, and they found a steady market for stained glass, tiles and church hangings to complement the medieval character of the new Gothic revival churches. In 1862 the Firm won two gold medals for their exhibits at the International Exhibition, South Kensington Museum (later the Victoria and Albert Museum). The stained glass in particular was so successful that it was initially thought to be original medieval work and there were calls for it to be disqualified.



RIGHT *The Flowerpot*, designed by Morris and worked by May in about 1880, in silk and gold on a linen ground. The panel was available in kit form from Morris and Co, to be made up at home into a cushion cover or firescreen. Embroidery was an important part of the output of the Firm from the very beginning.

In stained glass, as in the other areas of decoration with which he became concerned, Morris was quick to grasp and master the potential of the medium, instinctively knowing what the material could do best. Morris supplied glass for over four hundred buildings during his lifetime but the best examples date from this early period, when he designed more than one hundred windows himself as well as providing backgrounds for Burne-Jones's figures and Webb's animals. The Firm returned to the medieval notion of using coloured glass in a mosaic to tell a story, rather than merely painting on to glass. Its use of pure colour, strong outline and detail was much admired.

The Firm had another popular line in handpainted tiles for panels and fireplaces. Faulkner's sisters Kate and Lucy did much of this work. Morris began a collaboration with the artist William de Morgan (1839–1917) who was to become a ceramicist noted for his natural forms and Islamic motifs.



RIGHT The L-shaped Drawing Room in Linley Sambourne's house, 18 Stafford Terrace, London W8. Linley Sambourne (1844-1911), a Punch illustrator, furnished his home in an accepted 'artistic' manner, with Morris patterns, blue and white china and stained glass featuring sunflower motifs, the symbol of the Aesthetic Movement. The house, with furnishings intact, is now the headquarters of the Victorian Society.



house, preserved intact by the Victorian Society, includes a number of Morris designs, including *Pomegranate* paper on the morning-room ceiling and a Dearle carpet in the hall. Sambourne's house, a good example of an 'artistic' interior, is far more cluttered and conventionally decorated than one imagines would have met with Morris's approval. Not all of Morris and Co.'s customers could have been sympathetic to his radical design philosophy. There must have been many who simply added their choice of wallpaper or fabric to the characteristic High Victorian muddle.

More satisfying, at least on one level, was the opportunity to create new interiors from scratch, and much of the best work was produced in collaboration with Webb. For the most part, sympathetic clients gave Morris an element of design control, although he could be very uncomfortable working for what he saw as an privileged élite.

Morris and Co. had a long association with the Howard family. George Howard, later ninth earl of Carlisle, commissioned Webb to build a London house (1868–72). Morris was involved in the decoration of 1 Palace Green and in the decoration of the other family homes, Castle Howard in York and Naworth Castle in Cumberland. For the library at Naworth he designed an immense Hammersmith carpet.

Another important client was Sir Lowthian Bell, a northern industrialist. Webb also built his house, Rounton Grange, Northallerton, Yorkshire (1872–76). Morris and Burne-Jones designed an embroidered frieze for the dining room which was worked by Lady Bell and her daughters. The drawing room had a Hammersmith carpet on the floor and *Flower Garden* fabric stretched on the walls.

Alexander Ionides, a Greek importer, commissioned Morris and Co. to decorate his home in Holland Park, London, in 1880. Well-publicized and highly influential, the house featured a wealth of Morris textiles, carpets, tapestries and wallhangings. The house was one of the best examples of complete Morris decoration at the time.

It is likely that Morris found his work for Wickham Flower even more congenial. Morris had already devised the decorative scheme for Flower's London home when he went to visit his country house, Great Tangley Manor in Surrey, recently enlarged by Webb. A great many textiles were subsequently used in the house, as well as carpets and

